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ABSTRACT

Components of the sociocultural, professional, and institutional contexts of teacher professional development in Spain are explored. Teacher training changes in Spain arise from the sociocultural context, with the increasing democratization of the nation since the 1980s, the recognition that areas and elements of society have been underserved, the links between Spain and the rest of Europe, and the requirements of the changing economy and the information society. Teachers need more support from the profession as a whole and from society to help them adopt innovations and be aware of the country's cultures. Educational authorities are recognizing the need for changes in teacher education, as exemplified by teacher training in Andalusia and the creation of the Andalusian Institute of Teacher Training and Evaluation. Professional development is also a concern in the private schools, as the report of a private school improvement initiative demonstrates. (Contains 22 references.) (SLD)

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ED 381 584

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN SPAIN

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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Paper presented at the Symposium "Educational Reform in Spain: Changing Curriculum, Teaching and Teacher Education" of the A.E.R.A., New Orleans, 1994.

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The context of innovation in Teacher Training.

We analyse certain components of the sociocultural, professional, and institutional context, in which processes of professional development originate or develop. The framework of Reform is contained in documents issued by the Educatiõn Authorities. As its key factor for achieving teaching quality is **teacher qualification and training**, in which the participation of the teaching profession is essential, special attention is given to **professional development.**

1. Sociocultural context. We note some elements that make changes in Teacher Training necessary:

a) The progressive democratization of Spain since the 80s has lead to the establishment of **democratic relations** in the Educational System, the Educational Institution, and the classroom. This means a greater **responsibility, participation and independence** in educational work.

b) At the same time, the recognition of **plurality of cultures**, (or diversity in specific components of the microculture), and of **personal diversity**, leads to the need of selecting a culture that is meaningful and relevant to the students, and facilitating the personal structuring of learning.

c) The need for **varied and compensatory attention** in areas that are socioculturally and economically deprived requires adaptation of the curriculum. This can be done only by teams of teachers working in each zone, having a knowledge of the real problems found there, and more concretely, by the teachers of each educational centre. They should take appropriate measures to promote the development of knowledge, the motivation, and the intellectual abilities and driving forces of their students.

d) The progressive **technification of the world of work** in the "information" society (Bhola, 1992) demands careful attention to professional training, with a more technical orientation, in which it is important to learn to solve – and even to pose – a wide range of technical problems. But it is also necessary to understand, decode and use information coming from the different mass media of communication, and integrate this material and resource into the curriculum.

e) The **economic crisis and the crisis of values** suffered by society – and particularly youth – with problems of unemployment, drugs, AIDS, traffic accidents, etc., means for teachers new training needs to attend to new educational demands.

f) The **entry into the European Economic Community** has generated new needs of intercultural communication and understanding.

g) Finally, society and educational bodies have recognized the existence of **weak relations between the school and the social environment** (Marchesi, 1992), observed above all in BUP (post leaving-age non-compulsory secondary education). BUP is seen as an over-academic educational level that lacks personality-forming components for young people, who are offered an adult culture without having the corresponding independence and responsibility, and are not given sufficient vocational guidance. One reason is that teachers at this level have received a scientific training in the subjects they teach, but lack professional training as teacher, since the current plan of post-graduation training is excessively poor in pedagogic content and in the practice of teaching.

The aforementioned requires changes in both curriculum and teacher characteristics.

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2. The professional culture of teachers.

We note some elements obtained from research reports (Esteve, 1987; Santos Guerra, 1983; Gimeno, 1988) and from our own contacts with teachers.

a) **Negative expectations of the Reform** (Escudero, 1991) as a result of experience of the educational reform carried out in 1970. The change required was pre-thought out, and the media supplied for its understanding and putting into effect were scarce. Trained for the change was by mass courses undertaken in teachers' own time. They sometimes had to travel up to 70 or 80 kms., after five in the afternoon, returning home at 10 or 11 at night, with the next day being a normal school day with the children.

At the same time, the workload was increased, and was qualitatively different: from teaching via textbooks to personal programs and a more varied use of resources; from qualification to evaluation.

b) When informed of the features of the current educational reform, teachers realized that they **lacked the training** to construct a curriculum or make the appropriate curricular adaptations.

c) **Lack of knowledge of cultures** other than their own – the one usually transmitted in schools, and specifically that of the middle class.

d) **Lack of permanence in the center** because of the system of work access. Thus they cannot consolidate or review projects. Nor can they establish real community connections, or those of a cohesive professional group sharing and creating a culture.

e) **Academic qualifications**: Since 1971, teachers take an undergraduate course (3 years) of Primary/Secondary Education. However, many teachers have not received a university education, but instead mid-level courses. They are considered as second-class professionals. But even the university graduates have not increased their self-esteem. With the same qualification, teachers working in the school have a lower status than those working in the Authority creating programs or advising other teachers in problems of curricular or professional development, etc. For example, a teacher – the wife of a teacher working in the Educational Technology Section of the Andalusian Institute of Teacher Evaluation and Training – remarked:

> "when my husband was a teacher like me..., ... now it's necessary to try and get on equal terms"...

For this reason they are both studying the course of Adaptation in the Educational Science Faculty. The husband (Administrative technician) also needs to feel on equal terms with his work colleagues, all of whom have higher degrees.

f) **Demoralized** by discipline problems, lack of motivation and effort from their students, and little understanding of their work on the part of parents. This is not a profession of prestige.

g) There are also teachers who consider education as a movement for improving people and society. They need and **ask for opportunities to change the school**, and show enthusiasm in its projects and activities.

h) But these teachers **interested in projects of improvement** become discouraged when not finding colleagues with whom to begin the work of innovation (Holly and Gooldsmid, 1989).

i) Teachers who understand the language of the reform and the need for changes in the teacher's role become more conscious and **critics of the idea of the teacher as researcher**. Some say that they cannot be

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required to be researchers because they do not have the necessary knowledge, techniques or media, and much less – time. They may rate the proposals of the Authority as "empty words" or "the same jars with different labels".

j) This is endorsed by the **perception of paradoxes** between the proposals of the Authority and the resources assigned to the improvement program, and even between the components making up the programs. For instance, when independence and self-evaluation are called for, norms are laid down to prepare curricular projects of the center and detailed programs for evaluating the school. These are regulated by inspectors and other officials of the Authority, chosen for the task, who also manage the program to be applied, though they can adapt it to different contexts.

3. Measures adopted by the Authority to change the situation of teachers.

An important aim of the change is to increase the professional satisfaction of teachers – one of the main factors determining education quality (Marchesi, 1992). This means taking into account their professional aspirations.

What factors affect professional satisfaction, according to the Authorities?

- salary level,
- possibilities of promotion,
- training,
- working conditions (Liston and Zeichner, 1990; Louis, 1992; Hargreaves, 1992), and
- social recognition.

There are various results from this analysis:

a) **Training is considered important**: the participation of teachers in a training program is an incentive for their professional career.

b) training programs should be within the school day, thereby freeing teachers of teaching duties. The Authority nominates substitute teachers for those programs that take place outside the school, such as short courses or seminars. However this is not always possible because of lack of economic resources, and reproduces the situation mentioned previously: attendance at training courses after the school day. Other forms, such as projects of cooperative professional development or self-training programs, mean a reduction of school activity with students. The Authority may even concede leave of absence for studies.

c) the Authority pays for the courses, or subsidizes the projects, if the committees of the Teacher Training Centers (TTC) responsible for their evaluation approve the project, and if they consider it is "important" and needs aid. This also assumes that those who evaluate the projects understand what they consist of, which is not always so.

d) Reduction of the student teacher ratio.

e) Training of teachers specialized in assessment of the different school problems: curriculum, organizational development, professional development, evaluation ...

f) Creation of institutions for the creation of Teacher Training Plans.

4. Institutions responsible for In-service Teacher Training.

Here we discuss Andalusian institutions of teacher training. In fact, these are similar in other Regions,

but the one we work in is the one we know best.

4.1 **The Andalusian Institute of Teacher Training and Evaluation**.

This Institute was created in 1990 with the main aim of in-service teacher training. In 1992, it was also made responsible for Evaluation in all educational fields, and drew up the Andalusian General Plan of Teacher Training, to be achieved via Annual Plans. These were put into effect from the academic year 1991-92.

Another important function of this institute is the coordination of educational research and innovation, fomenting experiments to make possible a permanent environment of renovation and flexibility in the new educational system, and encouraging University participation in the permanent training of the profession (Huberman, 1988).

4.2 **The CEPs** (the Teachers Center). These were set up in 1984 as

> "preferred instruments for the improvement of the teaching profession and the fomenting of its professionalism, and for the development of activities of pedagogical renovation and dissemination of educational experiments, oriented towards the improvement in teaching quality" (Art. 1, Real Decreto 2112/84).

They are an institution inspired above all by the Teachers Centers of England and Norway (Marcelo, 1994). They exist throughout Spain, but in Andalusia, have been consolidated during the 90s as fundamental institutions charged with directing the Teacher Training Programs under way (Mingorance, 1993). They are stable platforms for the training, study, and team work of teachers at all educational levels (Andalusian Teacher Training Plan, 1992), and have the aim of enabling the teaching profession to think about and investigate its own educational reality, and thereby begin to intervene in it.

They are managed democratically and with active participation, have a high degree of independence, and are thus a fundamental unit of pedagogical renovation and educational innovation. Their more concrete functions can be summed up as follows: To supply information, to offer documentation and specialized support for curricular development and orientation, to organize work seminars and assessment, to prepare materials, and to help in the interchange of experiences between teachers.

4.3 **Network of Advisers of Area, Level or Subject of the curriculum**.

These are teachers who are specialists in the didactics of their field of activity. Being close to the teaching staff, they are the architects of teacher support and training in the problem areas that crop up.

The Advisers have been allotted the following tasks: to
promote and push the creation of work groups; to orientate the activities of the different constituted groups along didactic and scientific research lines; to detect and analyze training needs in the schools, with the aim of establishing the necessary plans of action; to collaborate in the work of the Teachers' Center to which they are ascribed, and to work as a team with the advisers of their area and level and those of other areas in preparing and carrying out coherent training plans. These are tasks that require great independence, but the advisers run the risk of being perceived, even by themselves, as "accomplices of Administration politics" (Marcelo, 1994, p. 434)

4.4 **Structures of Coordination: the Technical Committees**

These were set up to coordinate the Training Plans of the various CEPs, and to participate in the evaluation and follow-up of the permanent training of teachers. They comprise groups of experts - officials of the Education Authority - although experience so far suggests they may be converted into another organ of control, homogenization and institutionalization of these programs, interfering with their independence and their fitting to the training needs identified (Marcelo, 1994).

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5. Training Plans.

Although there are different training methods, the White Paper (proposal for debate) on the Reform (1989) and later documents set up a model of permanent training based on professional practice, centered on the school, and directed at solving problems of curricular development; however, it proposes that diverse activities are offered, as the training needs are different.

Types of training program currently offered.

Marcelo (1994) collected and classified the different training methods planned and carried out in Spain via the various Regional Communities. These show conceptual differences in teacher training, although basically most programs converge. Here we refer expressly to the methods of permanent teacher training programmed by the Andalusian Authority.

5.1 **Courses**. This is an activity of an informative nature, carried on outside the school, and whose content refers to current topics that the teaching profession should know about, such as, for example, Andalusian culture, new technologies of information and communication, health education, consumer education, environmental education, road use, coordination between teaching and the workplace, school orientation, etc.

5.2 **Self-informative activities**. We consider as self-training activities those whose initiation and conduct are essentially the responsibility of teachers involved in a training process.

a) **Permanent Seminars and Research Projects**. This is a method of teacher training based on Work Groups as a system of self-improvement and in-group meditation with the aim of promoting a qualitative and progressive change in education (Andalusian Teacher Training Plan, 1992).

They are considered a good medium for the interchange of educational experiences, and for the dissemination and study of new didactic techniques. They also help teachers develop initiative and creative capacity, mould a research and innovative attitude, and learn the techniques needed for research work.

At the same time, they appear to provide education with an appropriate environment for the preparation of projects and curricular materials adapted to the social, cultural and psychological characteristics of their own students.

They are equally a medium for organizing work teams and constructing a democratic culture, where students and other members of the community can find a place.

b) **Projects of Educational Innovation**. This type of educational activity is designed for adaptation to the constant changes in our society and which generate situations that the educational system must respond to.

The need for innovation also arises from the particular problems of each school, or of each school zone. Thus it is recommended that the Work Group is the unit for design and classroom implantation of didactic innovation. It can be formed of teams of teachers of the school itself, or of teachers from different schools of the same zone. Up to now, 150 Innovation Projects have been approved in Andalusia, on concrete problem topics mentioned in the section Courses.

A special form of Innovation Project is that of Professional Development centered on the School. These are Global Projects in which all the teaching staff take part, generally on Curricular or Organizing Development or both, and which take up much time. They are usually projects of Research-Action, requiring large doses of initiative, resources, advice, collaboration and time, whose aim is to construct a shared culture. They are evaluated by the Authority. There is still little experience in this type of work; it is costly and gives rise to many problems, so that we have heard it said that the few projects approved are experimental, since it is not sure that they can give better results than others, although there is considerable literature on this educational method.

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Finally, one means of improving in-service teacher training is the **Evaluation of Training Programs**. In Andalusia, this has begun during the current academic year. In other Regions, it began before, but there is still little experience of evaluation, and above all we do not have significant data.

6. The institutional context.

In Spain, **there are two types of school: state and private**. The teachers are likewise classified, and their training opportunities are different. The Authority feels itself responsible for the training of teachers who work in the state schools, but much less so for the private sector.

We will describe both contexts, but always with reference to Seville, where we work. Our remarks come from a study we made in 1981 on 24 Schools of the city. Twelve of these were state and the other 12 private. So that they represented all the population sectors in their social, cultural and economic characteristics, they were chosen not at random, but based on our prior knowledge of the schools. The sample was such that each municipal district was represented (spatial localization). Later, in 1986, we made a closer study of 12 of the previously studied schools, using the same criteria of representativeness.

Between 1990 and 1992 (two school years) we worked as advisers on a project of professional development centered on the school in one of the private schools that we had already studied.

We continue receiving information on the state schools through teaching courses in the University, in which teachers take part. This year we are participating in research on evaluation of innovation projects in Andalusia.

6.1 **The institutional context of the state school**.

The state school is created and financed by the respective Educational Authority at the request of the Provincial Delegation of Education which sets out the educational needs of each zone.

The **teachers** are civil servants who join the body of teachers of Infant, Primary or Secondary Education by public examination (the Opposition). They are not teachers of a particular school, but of the Province in which they pass this exam. In certain cases, teachers are hired by the Authority on a temporary basis, generally for a few months.

How are teachers allotted a school? If there are posts free, these are competed for. The order of choice depends on points gained from academic studies, from the Opposition, and from length of service, as well as for other credits such as attendance on courses or participation in some training project.

The school does not select its teachers, but simply finds them there (and at other times, loses them). There are various reasons for this:

a) the desire of teachers to work preferentially in the city rather than the village, so that their own children have better educational opportunities: there is greater choice of school, and more alternatives of extra-curricular educational activities.

b) the desire to teach in the best schools (or at least those with a good name): essentially those having students with a high cultural level and without discipline problems.

c) the desire to work in the same city or town as the spouse when he/she is a teacher or official of some public body. This has traditionally been recognized as a right by the Administration.

d) the need for a change of function within education work (many teachers become "burnt-out"), or of promotion within the profession (curricular advisors, education inspectors, support teams for special needs of the school, etc.).

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This means that one characteristic of the context of the state school is **mobility**, obstructing the constancy and continuity of certain types of training project. On the other hand it results in a heavy demand for training, which on occasions is not "desire and interest" for its own sake, as the gaining of attendance certificates in training activities is important for teachers' personal and professional future. At the same time, this situation has repercussions on the type of work that is possible for professional development.

This "mobility" is also seen among School Principals, as they are elected democratically for three-year periods, and do not need any special training for the position. At times they are not the best possible Principal, nor an academic leader – sometimes not even a leader. At other times, they are.

Furthermore, it is necessary to remember other characteristics of the professional culture of teachers, which we have referred to before, and which coincide with those in other countries.

6.2 **The institutional context of the private school**.

These schools are created by some private person or body, generally religious institutions. There are also certain schools created by a group of teachers, or parents and teachers as a cooperative, but these are very few.

There are two types of private school, the "co-shared" and the totally private. The latter are also very few, and although they must comply with the curricular prescriptions of the Authority, function more freely. The government does not give them any economic aid.

In contrast, while the "co-shared" private schools hire their own teachers, the government pays the salaries (at rates agreed with the trade unions – not the same as those of state school teachers, although approaching them) if the school fulfils certain requirements in organization, selection of students, etc. They can organize extracurricular activities, for which the Education Authority regulates the amounts that students are charged, while at the same time, the activity must be non-compulsory.

We have studied and worked (hopefully in a collaborating form) in a private primary school. We set out some of its characteristics, which it shares with most schools of the same type.

a) It is a hierarchically-organized institution. Decisions are taken for the whole school before its members feel a need. The professional development project in which we took part as external advisers originated as such a case.

b) It is a religious "private" school, with a history of social appreciation: "a good school".

c) The Principal (a woman), representing the Institution that created and maintains the school, considers that the **quality** of the center and of the teachers needs **renewal**, which assumes both being informed and carrying out the educational practice in accord with the Political Reform. This is an idea that, at first sight, the teachers share.

d) The image of an "**efficient school**" entails objective, socially recognized aims: the curriculum contained in the textbooks is public and easily known by and shared with the parents.

e) **The teachers**:

* are workers hired by the institution; their **prestige** and **permanence** in the center depend on the judgement of management. The idea of the teachers is that

"in the private sector people work harder, earn less, and almost nobody complains".

* Therefore, participation in **improvement** activities programmed by management is essential.

* Teamwork is also essential, as is having years of experience in carrying out programs in course-teams. This is an indicator of the integration of the teachers in the center.

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* As **professionals** their image as a good teacher is shaped by the following features:

. **To know** their function.

. **To program** "correctly"; it is necessary to know how to program as required by the Administration, now "it is necessary to make a curricular design for the course, and a Curricular Project of the Center". Thus it must be understood what to do and how to do it.

. **To control** the learning, whose content **is transmitted** and whose activities **are directed**.

. **To be conscious** of teaching-learning problems.

. To seek techniques or strategies - "What's **new**?" - to solve the problems.

7. Characteristics of the work project with the teachers of this private school:

As a collaborative project of research and professional development, it has three central ideas:

1. We regard innovation from the cultural point of view (House, 1988), and so put the accent on the "meaning" (the feeling of what is done, valued, or tried) resulting from attempts at change, rather than on the changes themselves. Furthermore, we regard change as a meeting between cultures: that proposed by official political documents, and that of the Center. Thus some time must be spent on clarifying both professional thinking and the culture of the school, as well as to studying and debating the curricular subjects, so as to facilitate the elaboration and design of the curriculum of the Center.

2. We have attempted to make the research evaluative. The proposal of its being carried out as a thoughtful and selfcritical process from the activity itself, with the help of advisers and researchers, could be an efficient way of generating processes of school improvement, as it is unlikely that teachers improve their practices as a simple result of information on the results of research of other workers (Klafki, 1988).

This seems to us to assume the long-term collaboration between the teachers of the primary school and the university teachers involved in the project.

3. With respect to the professional development project, we think this should respond to the need to potentiate the knowledge of the teacher and the development of his/her cognitive potential, and the mastery of methodological alternatives to meet teaching tasks, as expressed by the teachers. Even more, it should favor the capacity, the atmosphere, and the means to achieve this knowledge and evaluate critically the practical problems (Weiss, 1989) in the context. That is, as an intention, professional development requires participation in a research project that helps in teaching studies, and at the same time the learning of research techniques, while giving the opportunity of team meditation with colleagues (Liston and Zeichner, 1990) on practical problems in the context of the educational center (Elliot, 1990; Cornbleth, 1990).

7.1 **Process**. The project was carried out in two different stages:

a) the first covered a complete course of the Professional Development Project Centered on the School (initial contact, identification of needs, negotiation, design of the project of change, development and evaluation) during the academic year 1990-91 (Estebaranz and Mingorance, 1991). It comprised only a group of 10 teachers of the center, who took part fully in the process.

However, although we worked on an innovation project focused on experimentation and analysis of teaching models to develop student thinking (following Joyce and Weil, 1985), we cannot say that this was a characteristic collaborative model, since the context of the institution described yielded more problems and dilemmas than normal. Moreover, the training model in this context becomes paradoxical.

b) In the second phase (the academic year 1991-92), the aims of the project were streamlined and the differences between teachers and advisers ironed out. Teachers want to **learn more about teaching**; some simply because they have to cover a period each week destined to education; others because they see that they are making progress. The latter group suggested the idea of jointly planning an interdisciplinary didactic unit that could be applied to all levels of the school, based on their positive experience of work during the last academic year applying constructivist teaching models. The remaining teachers, up to 25, were "infected" by the proposal and accepted it.

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For us – external advisers of the project – the aims are **to facilitate independence** (Mezirow, 1983, Macroff, 1988) **and collaboration** both in the process of curricular design and development and in professional development, through collaborative, thoughtful work on the curriculum; and to facilitate the **experience of learning from colleagues** via joint projects and the sense of security that the interaction with colleagues **gives to professional development** (Butt, 1991).

These aims were a natural result of the process in which we were involved, and of experience from the work of the last academic year: the teachers learned about teaching, but depended heavily on us – they did not take a single step without our presence, and thought little about their "process" of professional development. This gave us the dilemma: To what extent could we use a model of professional development centered on the School if the teachers were not independent and not very thoughtful about their own professional development?

The CEP adviser found the project very ambitious, and checked (during a visit to the center) that the work was being carried out as planned. The center was advised not to undertake the project alone, but to apply for the approval of various seminars on curriculum area to obtain further funds to carry out the project.

According to their own evaluation, the experience of the teachers in this work was very positive from the points of view both of student learning and the professional aspect, but organizational problems were created which could have caused a crisis situation for certain pillars of the institution.

At present, they continue taking part in courses and seminars, in order to meet "correctly" the periodic demands of the Authority. But we no longer participate.

Methodology of research/Methodology of work in professional development.

As this is a qualitative methodology, we do not separate techniques of data collection, interpretation, and results, as this is usually a complex process in which there are components of each phase at any one moment.

Research techniques, which in this case overlap with those of work on the Professional Development project, were basically the following:

1– **the seminar or workshop**, which takes place with the participation of the whole staff, or of the teachers of the Course, or of Area – in the Upper School – depending on the work needs throughout the year, with phases and content alternating (Birkenbihl, 1989). This was the most important technique, in accord with Butt (1991), for whom relations between colleagues are the best context for professional and curricular development.

2– **Interviews.** These are an important technique in understanding the subjectivity of teachers and their perception of these processes, as they help in determining action strategies (Huber, 1991).

a) In groups with the management team of the Center: Director of E.G.B. (Basic Education – primary and secondary), Coordinators of Pre–school, and 1st and 2nd stages of E.G.B., to negotiate what might be the work for the year and clarify possible lines of work.

b) Frequent informal interviews, sometimes by telephone, with the Principal. This facilitates follow–up of the process, information, links with other occasions, and the evaluation of each stage.

c) Interviews with the pedagogic leader. This helps both leader (internal adviser) and external advisers to generate ideas and evaluate the process. It also helps in clarifying the information obtained by the external advisers, as the leader has a much richer contextual grasp of the facts, and in supporting the internal leader in his/her initiatives and moments of discouragement from our position of external expert. These interviews are occasional, and sometimes outside the Center. We have found that their essential effect is to clarify the function and strengthen the resolve of the leader.

As a **Conclusion**, we would note that there is a change in the **professional independence** of teachers, who are at the same time incorporating new forms of action (including value judgements), checking consequences, and considering both end and means (Buchman, 1987), but the work has many obstacles and takes up much time (Lauriala, 1992).

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